

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

7A-18

Orleans

N

EAS.333

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Campground Road Area

Photograph



Address: 20 Hide Away Lane

Historic Name: William B. Higgins House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1925

Source: Title research, Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
None

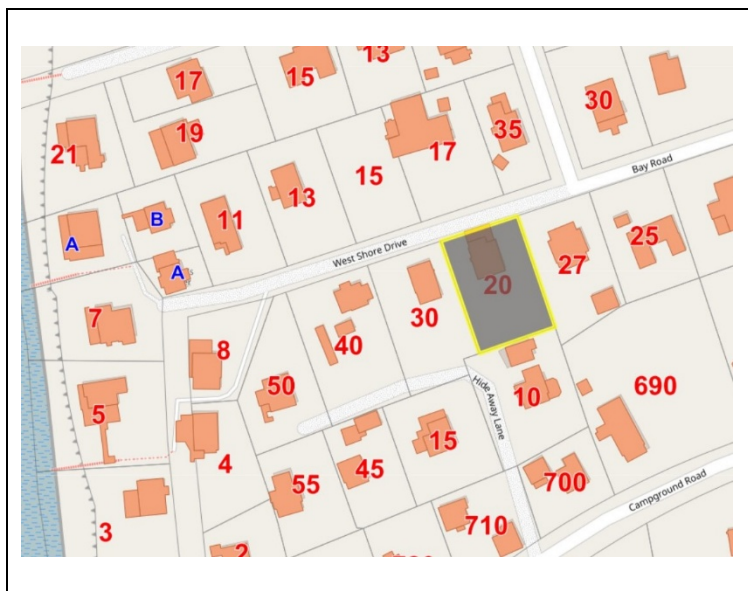
Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.17 acres

Setting: This property is located on a short lane of small parcels between Campground Road and West Shore Drive where the parcels rise gently to the north. The surrounding area includes early-20th century cottage lots, and the area is now built out with modest cottages and houses from the early-20th to the early-21st centuries. The house is set back on its parcel with a broad clamshell driveway and lawn in front of the house.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

20 HIDE AWAY LANE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N

EAS.333

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The form of this stylistic house consists of a two-story, three-bay by two-bay, rectangular block with a low-pitched side-gable roof. The house rests on a low concrete block foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles with slightly-projecting open eaves capped by fascia boards. An exterior brick chimney rises up the west side elevation. The front (south) elevation has a centered replacement door flanked on each side by paired windows on the first floor and single windows on the second story. The windows have all been replaced with modern, thermal, 1/1 windows with minimal frames.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property is connected to the cottage development around Campground Road - one of the three earliest roads to extend west to Cape Cod Bay from the central sections of Eastham. Despite the early development of the road, which was established to serve the Methodist camp meetings in the mid-19th century, the great majority of houses that border it, especially to the north, are 20th-century vernacular summer cottages and retirement houses.

One of the early subdivisions at the west end of Campground Road was recorded in 1912 by Alonzo K. Higgins. Eastham-born Alonzo K. Higgins (1846-1918) married Elizabeth W. Rogers (1847-1923) in Orleans in 1870. He was listed as a farmer in census records throughout his life, but he was also very active in cottage development in the early-20th century. The 1912 subdivision consisted of 34 "Cottage Lots" on the north side of Campground Road that included what is now the southern portion of Bay Road and West Shore Drive (Figure 2).¹ The larger parcels were later subdivided to create the interior Hide Away Lane lots, and this house sits on a portion of Lot 16.

In 1912, Alonzo Higgins sold Lot 6 in his subdivision to William Higgins of Eastham.² In 1922, Alonzo also sold Lots 14, 15 and 16 to William Higgins.³ William B. Higgins (1875-1935) married Bertha H. Brewer (1880-1933) in Eastham in 1898. William Higgins owned other parcels in the Campground area, and he was very likely related to Alonzo Higgins, but their kinship is not yet known.

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 2/ Page 123.

² Book 363/ Page 115.

³ Book 386/ Page 313.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

N

EAS.333

According to census records, William Higgins was a house carpenter, one of many in Eastham in the early-20th century. If this house does date to ca. 1925 (the Assessor date), then he was likely the builder. It is one of three in a row along this small lane created between Campground Road and West Shore Drive (20, 30 and 40 Hide Away Lane). According to the Eastham Tax Commitment Books, starting in 1920, Higgins was assessed for an increasing number of cottages. It is not possible to know exactly when this cottage was built from those records, but a ca. 1925 construction date appears reasonable (which is also the Assessor date). Given that William Higgins did not buy Lot 16 until 1922, of portion of which comprises this parcel, it seems likely that he did not build this cottage until after 1922. He likely kept this house as a rental property – he was listed living on Nauset Road in the 1929 Directory.

A cottage is shown in this location in the 1938 United States Geological Survey (USGS) aerial survey of Cape Cod (Photo 2). This property was inherited by his adopted son, John W. Higgins, who was a widower living in North Eastham in 1941 when he sold this property “with buildings thereon” to Frank R. and Olive E. Person of Worcester.⁴ In 1948, the Persons sold this property to John A. Daniels, Norman Woodside, and Alvro Perry all of Somerville.⁵ These families were also connected in their ownership of the cottage next door at 30 Hide Away Lane (EAS.334). This property came to be owned exclusively by Alvro Perry and his wife, Thelma. In 1994, the estate of Alvro Perry sold the property to Brian K. and Debra A. Wilcox of Enfield, CT.⁶ In 2005, they sold it to the current owners, Michael and Michele Grillo of Sandy Hook, CT.⁷

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1910 Map, *Atlas of Barnstable County*, Boston, MA: Walker Litho. & Publishing Co., 1910.

Barnstable County Registry of Deeds. Deeds, Land Court Records, and Subdivision Maps.

Barnstable Patriot Archives. Sturgis Library Digital Newspaper Archive,
<https://digital.olivesoftware.com/Olive/APA/Sturgis/#panel=home>.

Dunham's 1929 Eastham (Mass.) Street Directory.

Larson Fisher Associates. Campground Road MHC Area Form EAS.N, 2005.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Reconnaissance Survey Report: Eastham." Typescript, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, 1984.

Town of Eastham Tax Commitment Books. 1902-57.

United States Geological Survey. Aerial Survey 1938-2020,

<https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/cape-cod-chronology-viewer/>.

www.ancestry.com - Vital records.

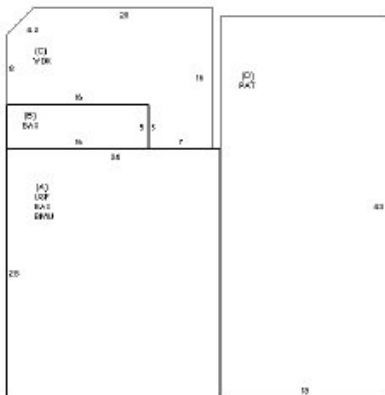


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.

⁴ Book 582/ Page 362.

⁵ Book 700/ Page 11.

⁶ Book 9361/ Page 48.

⁷ Book 20323/ Page 89.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s)Form No.

N

EAS.333

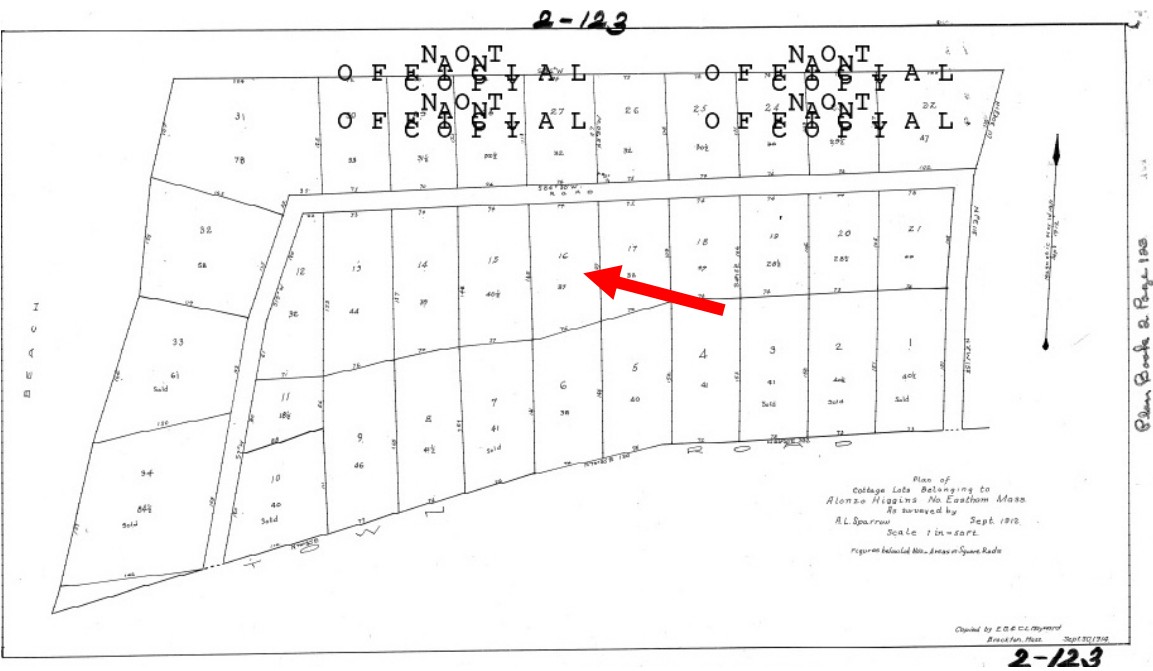


Figure 2. September 1912 Plan of Cottage Lots for Alonzo Higgins (arrow to Lot 16 added).



Photo 2. 1938 USGS aerial survey photo (arrow to 20 Hide Away Lane added).*

*Layover of streets do not align with actual streets in this 1938 photo.